

M E M O R A N D U M

To: Plan Review Staff
SFM Inspectors
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From: Don Zeringue, Chief Architect

Approved By: Henry H. Fry,
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Date: December 19, 2002 (Revised December 16, 2004)

RE: Consumer Fireworks

Sales facilities for consumer fireworks as defined by NFPA 1124:1-4 are characterized as being seasonal in nature and items are displayed outside of their original protective shipping packages. Individually, firework items are considered as benign hazards. This office is concerned with the potential life safety hazard associated with the aggregated firework commodities.

The retail sale of consumer fireworks and use of consumer fireworks does not fall within the scope of NFPA 1124, "Code for the Manufacture, Transportation, and Storage of Fireworks and Pyrotechnic Articles," and NFPA 495, "The Explosive Materials Code." NFPA 101:6.2.2.4 states that high hazard contents shall be classified as those that are likely to burn with extreme rapidity or from which explosions are likely.

This memo defines the criteria used to evaluate retail consumer fireworks sales facilities. This office determines that ALL new facilities of this nature shall be evaluated as high hazard mercantile occupancies and are subject to NFPA 101:7.11 and NFPA 101:8.4., as modified herein. This determination is based on the potential of the mass explosive potential of this commodity.

NFPA 101:7.11 provides special provisions for occupancies with high hazard contents and includes minimum requirements for travel distance, egress capacity, number of means of egress, and door locking hardware.

NFPA 101:8.4 addresses severe hazard special hazard protection and provides requirements which include suppression and explosion protection requirements.

NFPA 101:8.4.2 will typically not be applicable to this type of severe hazard. The sprinkler coverage of these areas shall conform to NFPA 13 as an “ordinary hazard.”

TEMPORARY TENTS, LEAN-TO'S, SHIPPING CONTAINERS, ETC.

Consumer fireworks sales operation in tents are field inspected and are not evaluated by formal plan review.

PERMANENT BUILDINGS

Permanent buildings dedicated to the sale of consumer fireworks shall be subject to formal plan review by this office and evaluated under NFPA 101:7.11 and NFPA 101:8.7. This includes buildings used exclusively for the sale of fireworks and those with a partial fireworks inventory which are entered and used by the general public. Permanent buildings which are not entered and used by the general public do not require a formal plan review by this office.

On an appeal basis, this office may grant some code allowances for seasonal sales involving small consumer firework quantities.

STORAGE AREAS

Storage area containing fireworks in a mercantile building shall comply with NFPA 101:8.4.1.1(3), which requires both 1-hour separation and sprinkler protection. Large storage facilities housing consumer fireworks shall be treated similarly. Large storage facilities housing consumer fireworks shall be treated similarly.